

7-1-2015

3.1 Classroom Policies

Saint Mary's College of California

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Recommended Citation

Saint Mary's College of California (2015) "3.1 Classroom Policies," *Faculty Handbook*: Vol. 2015 , Article 31.
Available at: <http://digitalcommons.stmarys-ca.edu/faculty-handbook/vol2015/iss1/31>

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3. ACADEMIC POLICIES AND SERVICES

3.1 CLASSROOM POLICIES

3.1.1 ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY, VIOLATIONS, PROCEDURES, AND PENALTIES

3.1.1.1 Academic Honesty

Saint Mary's College expects every member of its academic community to promote and abide by ethical standards, both in conduct and exercise of responsibility toward other members of the community. Absolute honesty must be adhered to at all times if the integrity of scholarship and the reputation of the College are to be maintained. Academic dishonesty is a serious offense at the College because it undermines the bonds of trust and honesty between members of the community and defrauds those who may eventually depend upon the community's integrity and knowledge.

Any work that a student undertakes as part of progress toward a degree or certification must be the student's own, unless the relevant instructor specifies otherwise. That work may include examinations, whether oral or written, oral presentations, homework, laboratory exercises, papers, reports, and other written assignments. Whenever possible, an instructor should specify the rules that students are to follow in completing these assignments. In written work other than examinations, a student must clearly indicate the sources of information, ideas, opinions, and quotations that are not his or her own.

Academic dishonesty as identified below is clearly distinguished from the free discussion and interchange of ideas among students and faculty, one of the most important benefits of academic life. The College encourages such discussions and interchanges in every possible way.

All Saint Mary's College students, faculty, and staff are bound by the Academic Honor Code beginning August 30, 2004. The Code is the same for all members of the community; however, there are some procedures that apply specifically to the nontraditional undergraduate programs and the graduate programs based on the needs and practices of those programs that differ from the procedures for the traditional undergraduate programs. The student handbooks for each program in the College detail these procedures (see the "Oversight and Sanctions" section below).

The faculty have a special role in upholding academic honesty and an ongoing responsibility for formulating policies that promote it. Any revision of the Academic Honor Code's provisions and procedures will involve faculty review at every appropriate level.

Note: Disciplinary action taken under the Academic Honor Code procedure is independent of the awarding of grades (an academic matter), and provisions of this procedure cannot be used for changing awarded grades.

Academic Honor Code

Saint Mary's College expects every member of its community to promote and abide by ethical standards, both in conduct and exercise of responsibility towards other members of the community. Academic Honesty must be demonstrated at all times to maintain the integrity of scholarship and the reputation of the College. Academic dishonesty is a serious violation of College policy because, among other things, it undermines the bonds of trust and honesty between members of the community and betrays those who may eventually depend upon the College's academic integrity and knowledge.

As an expression of support for academic integrity throughout the Saint Mary's learning community and as an administrative tool to discourage academic dishonesty, Saint Mary's has implemented an Academic Honor Code. The Academic Honor Code has been approved by the ASSMC Student Body, the Faculty Academic Senate, the Provost and the President of Saint Mary's College.

Pledge

All students, by enrollment, are subject to the Academic Honor Code. As part of the orientation process, traditional undergraduate students are also encouraged to sign a pledge to follow this Academic Honor Code. The pledge reads as follows:

As a student member of an academic community based in mutual trust and responsibility, I pledge:

- *to do my own work at all times, without giving or receiving inappropriate aid;*
- *to avoid behaviors that unfairly impede the academic progress of other members of my community; and*
- *to take reasonable and responsible action in order to uphold my community's academic integrity.*

Principles of Action

Individual Responsibility: It is the responsibility of every student and faculty member of the College community to know and practice the tenets of the Academic Honor Code. If there is confusion over the appropriateness of a particular action in light of the Code, or if a community member has recommendations about how to amend or alter the Code, those questions and suggestions should be addressed to the Academic Honor Council through the Academic Honor Code Coordinator, or to the program director or dean for graduate and professional studies programs.

Community Responsibility: In addition to maintaining one's own academic integrity, each member of the academic community should strive to preserve and promote integrity among his/her peers. This community empowers its members to take appropriate action in support of the Academic Honor Code. If a student, faculty member, staff member, or administrator suspects a violation of the Academic Honor Code, he or she should take action consistent with the Academic Honor Code Procedures described below. Additional possible actions include:

- Actively encouraging academic integrity among one's peers.
- Using moral suasion to avert a peer's academic dishonesty.
- Alerting a faculty member to suspected violations of academic integrity.
- Educating one another regarding the responsibilities of academic integrity.
- Helping a faculty member maintain an environment that is conducive to integrity.

Violations

All violations of the Academic Honor Code are administered by the Academic Honor Council (AHC), or program director or dean for graduate and professional studies programs. Members of the academic community are presumed to be familiar with the procedures outlined for determining a violation of the Academic Honor Code and, therefore, ignorance of the Code is not available as an excuse for an alleged violation of it.

Forms of violations of the Academic Honor Code include, but are not restricted to:

In Examinations: unauthorized talking during an exam; use of "cheat sheets" or other unauthorized course materials during an exam; having someone other than the student registered in the course take an exam; copying from another student's work; giving assistance to another student without the instructor's approval; gaining access to an exam prior to its administration;

informing students in other course sections of the contents of an exam; preparing answer sheets or books in advance of an exam without authorization from the instructor; unauthorized collaboration on a take-home exam; altering another person's answers in the preparation, editing, or typing of an exam; bringing unauthorized materials into an exam room.

On Papers and Class Assignments (understood as all work assigned in a course): submitting work prepared by someone else as one's own; using the thesis or primary ideas of someone else, even if those ideas have been edited or paraphrased, without proper citation; plagiarizing words, phrases, sections, key terms, proofs, graphics, symbols, or original ideas from another source without appropriate citation; receiving unauthorized assistance in preparing papers, whether from classmates, peers, family members, or other members of this or any other College community; collaboration within a class or across sections of a class without the consent of the instructor; preparing all or part of a paper for another student; intentional failure to cite a source that was used in preparing the paper; citing sources that were not used or consulted to "pad" a bibliography; citing sources out of another's bibliography without having consulted those sources; re-using previous work without the consent of the current instructor; providing a paper to another student for any purpose other than peer editing or review; using unapproved sources in preparing a paper; lying to an instructor to circumvent grade penalties; interference with access to classrooms, computers, or other academic resources.

In Research: fabricating or falsifying data in any academic exercise, including labs or fieldwork; using material out of context to inappropriately support one's claims; sabotaging another person's research; using another researcher's ideas without proper citation; taking credit for someone else's work; hoarding materials and/or equipment to advance one's research at the expense of others.

In the Use of Academic Resources: destruction, theft, or unauthorized use of laboratory data, research materials (including samples, chemicals, lab animals, printed materials, software, computer technology, audiovisual materials, etc.); stealing or damaging materials from the library or other College facilities; not returning materials when asked to do so; appropriating materials needed by others such that their work is impeded; helping others to steal, hoard, destroy, or damage materials.

In Academic Records: changing a transcript or grade in any unauthorized way; forging signatures on College documents; willful public misrepresentation of achievements, whether academic, athletic, honorary, or extracurricular; falsifying letters of recommendation to or from college personnel; bribing any representative of the College to gain academic advantage; breaking confidentiality about the proceedings of the Academic Honor Council, an Academic Review Board, or an investigative committee in the graduate and professional studies programs.

In Community Participation: Engaging in conduct that, if found to have occurred, violates the College's Technology Use and Whistleblower policies.

These types of conduct constitute violations of the Academic Honor Code and will be considered, if determined to have occurred, as acts of academic dishonesty. Any conduct that represents falsely one's own performance or interferes with that of another is academic dishonesty. Academic dishonesty is distinguished from academic inadvertence which involves an act that might appear to be a violation of the Academic Honor Code, but is determined to be without intention to deceive. The Academic Honor Council, or the dean or program director for adult and graduate programs, receives and considers all reports of conduct that is alleged to be a violation of the Code and, thereafter, decides whether the alleged conduct, if determined to have occurred, constitutes academic dishonesty or academic inadvertence. In cases of academic

inadvertence, no charge of academic dishonesty is made and the student is referred to the instructor for appropriate resolution.

The Academic Honor Code is not intended to impede or inhibit the free exchange of ideas and collaborative learning which are hallmarks of a Saint Mary's education. The College supports and encourages cooperative learning, group projects, tutoring, mentoring, or other forms of interchange of ideas among students and faculty, one of the most important benefits of academic life.

Traditional Undergraduate Students Oversight and Sanctions

For traditional undergraduate programs, the procedures for the administration of the Academic Honor Code, the determination of violations, and the imposition of sanctions are overseen by the Academic Honor Council (AHC). Specifics of the Academic Honor Council and its procedures are detailed in the Undergraduate Student Handbook.

Graduate and Professional Studies Programs Oversight and Sanctions

The procedures for the administration of the Academic Honor Code, the determination of violations, and the imposition of sanctions for students who have violated the Academic Honor Code in adult and graduate programs are set forth in the Graduate and Professional Student Handbook.

3.1.2 DEFINITION OF LETTER GRADES

The College defines letter grades as follows: A, excellent; B, very good; C, satisfactory; D, barely passing; F, failing. The average grade should be in the C range (1.5 to 2.5) and, while it is recognized that there may be significant variations in student ability and performance from class to class, department chairpersons should discuss grading practices with faculty who have a consistent pattern of deviation from the C range.

3.1.3 FINAL EXAMINATIONS AND PAPERS

3.1.3.1 Undergraduate Final Examinations and Papers

Final examination week is part of the 15-week Undergraduate academic term. Faculty may not require of students the completion of final examinations, final papers or projects in lieu of examinations, at any time through the last day of regularly scheduled classes, i.e., no such final requirements (exams, papers or projects) may be imposed before the end of the last regular class meeting of the term. During final exam week, students may not be required to submit final papers, projects, or take-home exams before the time at which the class's final exam would have been given according to the posted schedule, nor should these materials be submitted after that scheduled time has passed. Faculty who do not conduct a final exam will use the scheduled time for a final class meeting. Department chairpersons have the responsibility to see that the above policy is maintained. Copies of final examination questions should be given to the chairperson for departmental files. Final examination papers or term papers given in lieu of final examinations may be returned to the student or should be kept on file by the instructor for at least one year. Both final examinations and term papers are the property of the College.

3.1.3.2 Graduate and Professional Final Examinations and Papers

Final examinations are normally held during the last class period. Faculty who do not conduct final exams are expected to use the scheduled time for a final class meeting. Department chairpersons have the responsibility to see that the above policy is maintained. Copies of final examination questions should be given to the chairperson for departmental files. Final examination papers or term papers given in lieu of final examinations may be returned to the student or should be kept on file by the instructor for at least one year. Both final examinations and term papers are the property of the College.

3.1.4 MEETING CLASSES

Faculty are expected to meet their classes as scheduled or to notify the Dean of the School and their department chairperson in case of sickness or other reasons for absence. It is the responsibility of the faculty to work with the chair in ensuring that their classes are covered by colleagues if they are absent one or more consecutive class periods. In the case of multiple absences, the chair will inform the Dean of the School.

3.1.5 ORDER IN THE CLASSROOM

It is the faculty member's responsibility to create and maintain in his/her classroom an atmosphere conducive to serious academic pursuits. Hence, he/she may establish non-discriminatory norms for classes that further these goals. The Vice Provost for Student Life should be consulted in cases of serious disciplinary problems in student conduct.

3.1.6 CLASS ATTENDANCE (STUDENTS)

Regular class attendance is an important obligation and an essential condition for successful academic progress. Absences may seriously jeopardize the satisfactory completion of a course. Excessive absence can be a cause for dismissal from the College. Faculty are responsible for establishing and communicating the attendance policy for a given course. Students are responsible for all assignments in each of their courses, whether or not the assignments were announced during an absence. Penalties for absences depend upon the nature and the amount of work missed, of which the faculty member is the sole judge. It is not permissible to miss regularly-scheduled classes for the purpose of intercollegiate athletic practice. A student who misses the first session of a course, even if he/she is preregistered, may have his/her place in that course given away and be denied further attendance in that course.

3.1.6.1 Attendance Policy: Student Athletes

Student-athletes will not miss class for practice. Student-athletes, in the season in which their sport has schedules intercollegiate competitions, will not be penalized for missing class because of representing the College in those competitions – so long as the student's absence from the class for the purpose of intercollegiate athletic competition does not exceed:

- 4 classes on the MWF schedule (fall and spring terms)
- 3 classes on the T/Th schedule (fall and spring terms)
- 2 classes during a traditional January Term course
- 1 class per term (fall and spring) for labs and courses that meet once per week

3.1.7 CREDIT-HOUR POLICY

Saint Mary's College of California follows federal guidelines that measure for all courses and programs the amount of time students engage in coursework dedicated to achieving intended learning outcomes.

Standard Policy

In order to receive one hour of credit for one semester or trimester course, students will engage in approximately 750 minutes of contact time with the instructor of record and approximately 1500 non-contact minutes.

In order to receive one hour of credit for a quarter term course, students engage in approximately 550 minutes of contact time with the instructor of record and approximately 1100 non-contact minutes.

Equivalencies to the Standard Policy

In some cases the ratio of contact to non-contact activity may be adjusted in order to achieve learning outcomes according to pedagogical standards in a particular area of study. Courses requiring more than the amount of contact time described in the standard policy (such as laboratory courses, language courses, studio courses and practica) may require commensurately less non-contact time than others. Courses requiring less than the standard amount of contact time (such as independent studies, internships, service-learning courses and courses utilizing online or hybrid instruction) may require commensurately more non-contact time.

3.2 REGISTRARIAL POLICIES

3.2.1 UNDERGRADUATE ACADEMIC CALENDAR

For the traditional undergraduate programs, classes for the fall term customarily begin on the Tuesday after Labor Day. The fall term runs for fifteen weeks, including a final examination week. The third (or fourth) Friday in October and Thanksgiving recess (Thursday and Friday) are holidays in the fall. Classes for the January term begin on the first Monday after January 1 and continue for four weeks. After a one-week break, the spring term commences (i.e., five weeks after the start of the January term); classes begin on Monday. The term runs for fifteen weeks, including a final examination week. The only holidays are the week preceding Easter through Easter Monday, and this is considered part of the term. The spring term ends after Commencement exercises take place.

The process for setting the academic calendar for the traditional undergraduate programs is as follows: Three years in advance, the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Academics constructs an academic calendar using the above guidelines. The calendar is reviewed and approved in sequence by the Undergraduate Educational Policies Committee, the Provost's Academic Council of Deans, and the Academic Senate, each body ensuring that the calendar is guided by academic principles and processes (e.g., concern for loss of Monday classes due to holidays).

3.2.2 UNDERGRADUATE SUBMISSION OF GRADES

All faculty are required to submit mid-term grades (when applicable) and final grades. Faculty are expected to submit grades by the deadline set by the Registrar. Since mid-term grades serve as a progress report (and do not appear on the student's permanent record), instructors are expected to utilize the code numbers with unsatisfactory grades (D, F) as an indication to the student of specific deficiencies. The Registrar's office advises the Dean of the School when grades are not submitted at the mid-term period.

3.2.2.1 Grade Changes

The policies on assigning an I grade (Incomplete) and on grade changes are specified in the College *Catalog*. Petition forms for the above are available in the Registrar's office and are subject to approval by the Registrar.